

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable consideration of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 9, 11-15, 20, 21, 26, 27, and 30 are pending in the application, with claims 9, 20, and 26 being independent.

By this amendment, claims 1-8, 10, 16-19, 22-25, 28, 29, and 31-34 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 9, 11-15, 20, 21, 26, and 27 have been amended. Support for the amendments may be found in the application, as filed. No new matter has been added.

The Office Action rejected claims 23-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 101, because the claimed invention is allegedly directed to non-statutory subject matter. Without conceding the propriety of this rejection, and solely to advance prosecution, the preamble of claims 26 and 27 has been amended to obviate the rejection. As noted above, claims 23-25 and 28 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the Section 101 rejection are requested.

The Office Action also rejected claims 5, 8, 12, and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, as indefinite. Claims 5 and 8 have been cancelled herein, and thus the rejection is considered moot with respect to those claims. Regarding claim 12, the Office Action takes the position that “‘regular type paper’ should be more specifically defined.” Without conceding the propriety of this rejection, and solely to advance prosecution, Applicant has amended claim 12 to recite that “the second output paper size is a regular paper size.” Applicant submits that this new language is clear to one of ordinary skill in the art, and is supported by the disclosure at least at page 2, line

18, to page 4, line 11. Regarding claim 15, the Office Action asserts that this claim is indefinite because it is unclear whether “said layout means” refers to first or second layout means.

Applicant submits that this claim is definite as presented, but, solely to advance prosecution, has nevertheless amended the claim to refer to “arrangement layout means” and “second layout means.” Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the Section 112 rejections are requested.

Applicant notes that claims 16, 22, and 28 have been indicated as containing allowable subject matter, and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In keeping with this indication of allowable subject matter, the features of these claims have been added to independent claims 9, 20, and 26, respectively. Consequently, claims 9, 20, and 26 are submitted to be in condition for allowance.

The Office Action entered rejections of claims 1, 5-8, 17, 23, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), alleging those claims to be anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,474,475 (Kohtani et al.). Additionally, each of claims 2-4, 9-15, 18-21, 24-27, and 30-34 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over Kohtani et al. in view of one or both of U.S. Patent No. 5,768,488 (Stone et al.) and U.S. Patent No. 4,254,409 (Busby). As noted above, claims 1-8, 16-19, 22-25, 28, 29, and 31-34 have been cancelled, and independent claims 9, 20, and 26 are seen to be in condition for allowance for the reasons noted above. The foregoing actions have been taken without prejudice to or disclaimer of subject matter, and without conceding correctness of the rejections, but rather strictly to obtain an earlier allowance and to expedite issuance.

The remaining claims depend from one of the allowable independent claims. These dependent claims are believed to be in condition for allowance by virtue of that

dependency, and for reciting other patentable features of Applicant's invention. Favorable and independent consideration of the dependent claims are requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. J. Didas', is written over a horizontal line.

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